1 CLAIMS:

- 2 Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new
- 3 and desire to secure by Letters Patent is as follows:
- 4 1. A data processing system comprising:

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- 6 an I/O port for establishing connection between said
- 7 system and readers;
- 8 a program having the functionality to communicate with
- 9 said readers via said I/O port;
- 10 an operating system providing access of said program to
- 11 said readers;
- 12 characterized by the further components:
- a configuration tool for specifying access conditions
- of said program to said readers;
- a reader access layer component for determining the
- reader to be accessed according to the access
- 17 conditions specified by said configuration tool.

- A data processing system according to claim 1, wherein
 said I/O devices are communication links, cryptographic
 adapters, printers, or plotters.
- 4 3. A data processing system according to claim 1, wherein said configuration tool may be an integral part of said program.
- A data processing system according to claim 1, wherein
 said configuration tool and said reader access layer
 may be an integral part of said program.
- 10 5. A data processing system according to claim 2, wherein
 11 said configuration tool having access to a reader
 12 access list defining access rights and access
 13 priorities for that program in conjunction with said
 14 readers connected to said system.
- 15 6. A data processing system according to claim 5, wherein 16 for all installed programs a common reader access list 17 is available defining access rights and access 18 priorities for those programs in conjunction with said 19 readers connected to said system.
- 7. A data processing system according to claim 5, wherein for each installed program a single reader access list is available defining access rights and access priorities for that program in conjunction with said readers connected with said system.

- 1 8. A data processing system according to claim 4, wherein
 2 said access list is stored as file in a nonvolatile
 3 storage media and is used by said reader access layer
 4 during run-time.
- 5 9. A client-server system having:
- 6 a client comprising:
- 7 an I/O port for establishing a connection to readers,
- 8 at least one program product installed on said client
- 9 having the functionality to communicate with said
- 10 readers connected to said client,
- 11 a reader access list defining access conditions of each
- of said programs installed on said client to said
- 13 readers connected to said client, and
- 14 a reader access layer component for determining the
- 15 readers to be accessed according to the access
- 16 conditions specified by said configuration tool
- installed on said server; and
- 18 a server system comprising:

- 1 a reader access list defining access conditions of each
- 2 programs installed on said client to readers
- 3 connected to said client, and
- 4 a configuration tool for specifying access conditions
- of said programs to said readers connected to said
- 6 client.
- 7 10. A method for accessing readers by means of a system 8 according to claim 1, comprising the steps of:
- 9 sending a request for using a reader from said program 10 to reader access layer;
- 11 calling up a reader access list by said reader access 12 layer;
- carrying out a routine by said reader access layer by
- means of said reader access list with the following
- 15 steps:
- identifying an available reader with highest priority;
- 17 and
- 18 returning result to said program.
- 19 11. A method according to claim 8, wherein said routine comprises the steps of:

- 1 identifying a particular reader with the highest
- 2 priority by using said reader access list;
- 3 examining the availability of said particular reader;
- 4 if said particular reader is not available, identifying
- a next reader with the next lower priority by using
- 6 said reader access list and examining the availability
- 7 of said next reader; and
- 8 repeating the steps of identifying and examining using
- a subsequent lower priority as long as an available
- 10 particular reader is identified.
- 11 12. A method according to claim 10, wherein a newly added
- reader automatically receives the lowest priority in
- 13 the reader access list.
- 14 13. A method according to claim 10, wherein programs having
- 15 no assigned priorities in the reader access list
- receive a standard priority in said reader access list.
- 17 14. A method according to claim 10, including changing
- assigned priorities and standard priorities using the
- 19 configuration tool.
- 20 15. A method according to claim 10, wherein the priority
- 21 (0) means that the reader is only available for
- 22 programs with this reader selected.

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- 1 16. A computer program product stored on a 2 computer-readable media containing software for 3 performing the method according to claim 10.
- 17. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing a data processing system, the computer readable program code means in said computer program product comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the functions of claim 1.
 - 18. An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing accessing of readers, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 10.
- 19. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly
 19 embodying a program of instructions executable by the
 20 machine to perform method steps for accessing of
 21 readers, said method steps comprising the steps of
 22 claim 10.

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